

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.
1904.

Seventeenth Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Condition of the
East Grinstead Urban District for the Year ending 31st December, 1904.

AREA : 6,355 Acres. POPULATION (Census of 1901) : 6,094.

	1902	1903	1904
Population estimated to middle of year	6,200	6,300	6,400
Birth Rate per 1,000	24·3	25·2	23·5
General Death Rate per 1,000	10·1	9·8	10·6
Zymotic Death Rate per 1,000	·16	0·0	·31
Death Rate from Phthisis...	1·29	·78	1·4
Death Rate from Respiratory Diseases	1·4	1·7	1·5
Deaths under one year to 1,000 Births	74·4	81·1	69·1
Deaths over 65, per-centage of total Deaths...	44·7	22·6	31·7

VITAL STATISTICS.

In 1904 the deaths of 85 persons at all ages and from all causes were recorded in the district, against 84 in 1903 and 85 in 1902. These 85 deaths were at the rate of 13·2 per 1,000 of the total population. Of this number 11 or 12·9 per cent. were children under one year of age and were in the proportion of 7·3 per cent. of those born ; 27 or 31·7 per cent. were of persons 65 years of age and upwards. The deaths of seven persons 80 years of age and upwards were recorded, the oldest being 97 years old ; 11 children died under the age of one year, in the proportion of 69·1 per 1,000 registered births. Of the 85 recorded deaths, 23 occurred in the Workhouse and five in the Cottage Hospital. Excluding these 23 deaths, the death rate was 9·6. Of the 83 deaths, 17 were of persons not residing in the district, but brought into it from outside districts, 15 of them dying in the Workhouse and two in the Cottage Hospital.

CORRECTED DEATH RATE.

Excluding the deaths of the 17 persons who were admitted to public institutions in the town from outside districts, the correct death rate in the Urban District is 10·6 per 1,000 persons living. This is a slight increase on the previous year, when it was 9·8.

BIRTHS.

The births numbered 151, a decrease of 8 over those of the previous year ; 76 of these children were males and 75 females, equal to a birth rate of 23·5 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate, which had steadily risen from 23·4 in 1901 to 25·2 in 1903, thus shows a tendency to fall again, this decrease of births appears to have been almost universal in the urban districts throughout the country.

With the exception of two deaths from whooping cough, no mortality is recorded under the ordinary zymotic diseases.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Thirty-six cases were reported to me under the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act, as follows :—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	32
Diphtheria	...	...	...	4

With the exception of two cases of scarlet fever, which were isolated and treated at home, all the patients were removed to the Sanatorium.

There were admitted to the Sanatorium 21 cases of an infectious nature from outside districts, viz.:—

East Grinstead Rural	...	...	...	15
Cuckfield	...	...	...	6

The cases admitted from these two areas were as follows :—

	EAST GRINSTEAD RURAL.		CUCKFIELD.
Scarlet Fever	5
Diphtheria	5
Enteric	5

There were no deaths in the Sanatorium in 1904.

SCARLET FEVER.

There was an epidemic of scarlet fever of an exceedingly mild type in the last quarter of the year ; the cases were sporadic at first, occurring in different parts of the district. It was impossible to trace the origin of the first few cases, because no medical advice was sought ; it was not till peeling had taken place and other children had become infected that the original cases were detected. Altogether 32 cases were notified during the year and all but two of them were removed to the Sanatorium. The School at Saint Hill was closed early in December and the East Grinstead Schools and Sunday Schools shortly afterwards and were not re-opened at the usual time after the Christmas holidays, but were kept closed for seven days after the usual time of opening.

ENTERIC.

The only case of enteric fever reported in the district was a nurse at the Sanatorium, who took the infection from a patient admitted from the Rural District.

TUBERCLE.

Eight deaths from pulmonary phthisis or other tubercular disease were registered during the year, in the proportion of 11·7 per cent. of the deaths from all causes, equal to a death rate of 1·4 per 1,000 of those living.

The treatment of consumption by the “ open air ” method is now being carried out in many parts of the country, but no steps have been taken towards the erection of a sanatorium in this district. The results of this treatment are very encouraging, but success largely depends upon detecting and treating the disease in its early stages.

CANCER.

There were seven deaths from cancer in the district, equal to a death rate of 1·09 per 1,000 of those living. Great activity is being shown in this and other countries in searching for the cure of cancer, so far without result, but there is reason to hope that the origin or method of infection or of transmission of this terrible disease will eventually be discovered.

INFLUENZA.

During the last quarter of the year there were a good many cases of epidemic influenza in the district, generally of a very mild type, no death being directly attributed to this cause.

DIPHTHERIA.

The four cases of diphtheria notified to me were of sporadic distribution and were all of a very mild type ; they were all removed to the Sanatorium as soon as the nature of the disease was known. In only one of these cases could any sanitary defect be found in the house, in this instance a defective drain trap allowed an escape of sewer gas into the house.

In all cases of infection the patients were as quickly as possible removed to the Sanatorium by your Surveyor, who also promptly disinfected bedding and other contaminated materials in the steam disinfecter; the premises were in every instance fumigated with sulphur or formalin vapour, and re-papering of bedrooms and lime washing was carried out when necessary.

INQUESTS.

Nine inquests were held during the year; in four instances the verdict of the jury was "death from natural causes," the other five inquests were on persons who met with their death from accident. One of these inquests was held on an infant that died five minutes after birth, another was held on a man who died of phthisis 13 months after having sprained his ankle, the inquest being held apparently to determine the relation between the injury to his ankle and the subsequent lung affection.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

No more cottages have been erected by the Council under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, but the 18 cottages already built in the Bellaggio Road are in constant occupation.

DRAINAGE.

Owing to the extension of the drainage in the Baldwin's Hill district it will be necessary to increase the number of septic tanks at the Sewage Farm. At present the sewage is treated partly by the biological process and partly by broad irrigation. Nothing has yet been done towards draining the Sunnyside district; in my last Annual Report I drew attention to the need of dealing with this matter.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The factories and workshops have been systematically inspected and have been generally found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

The slaughter houses and dairies have been regularly inspected and, apart from the unavoidable annoyance to residents whose houses are close to some of the old slaughter houses in the town, no fault could be found with the way in which they were kept.

By the Surveyor's report it will be seen that 238 inspections were made, that 150 premises were visited and that 17 notices for the remedying of defects were served. The Surveyor's report also shows in detail what a great amount of sanitary work is carried out in the town.

The town was kept well supplied with water by the Company, no less than 1,296,750 gallons being used for street watering. Samples of water from the mains have been submitted every quarter to Sir Thomas Stevenson for analysis. His reports have been uniformly to the effect that the water is of a high degree of purity, and has shown no trace of deleterious organisms. Only one sample of well water was submitted to me for analysis, this water was polluted by surface water. On the defect being pointed out the necessary measures to prevent pollution were at once carried out.

The weather of 1904 was favourable to health; the last half of the year was particularly fine and dry. The rainfall amounted to 30.18 inches, which is about the average of the last 20 years. Rain was measured on 172 days, against 178 days in 1903.

PERCY E. WALLIS,

Medical Officer of Health.

OLD STONE HOUSE,

EAST GRINSTEAD.

March 21st, 1905.

VITAL STATISTICS OF EAST GRINSTEAD DISTRICT DURING 1904 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				TOTAL DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITU- TIONS IN THE DISTRICT.	Deaths of Non- Residents registered in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District.	NETT DEATHS AT ALL AGES BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Number.	Rate.*	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.					Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate.*
				Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate.*							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1894	5,350	145	27·2	17	117·0	79	14·7	18	14		65	12·1		
1895	5,500	127	23·09	5	39·0	98	17·8	33	27		71	12·9		
1896	5,700	152	26·6	11	72·3	88	15·4	20	13		75	13·1		
1897	5,800	145	25·0	24	165·5	92	15·8	26	18		74	12·7		
1898	5,900	136	23·05	19	139·7	99	16·7	33	24		75	12·5		
1899	6,000	172	28·6	16	93·0	97	16·1	26	14		83	13·8		
1900	6,100	130	22·7	8	57·5	65	12·2	13	20		51	9·01		
1901	6,150	144	23·4	13	81·02	63	10·2	9	5		48	9·2		
1902	6,200	151	24·3	12	74·4	85	13·7	28	22	1	63	10·1		
1903	6,300	159	25·2	13	81·1	84	13·3	31	20		64	9·8		
Averages for years 1894-1903.	5,900	146	24·9	13·8	92·0	85	14·5	23·8	17·7		67·9	11·5		
1904	6,400	151	23·5	11	69·1	85	10·6	29	17		68	10·6		

* Rates in Columns 4, 8 and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

NOTE.—The deaths to be included in Column 7 of this Table are the whole of those registered during the year as having actually occurred within the district or division. The deaths to be included in Column 12 are the number in Column 7, corrected by the subtraction of the number in Column 10 and the addition of the number in Column 11.

By the term “Non-Residents” is meant persons brought into the district on account of sickness or infirmity, and dying in public institutions there; and by the term “Residents” is meant persons who have been taken out of the district on account of sickness or infirmity, and have died in public institutions elsewhere.

The “Public Institutions” to be taken into account for the purposes of these Tables are those into which persons are habitually received on account of sickness or infirmity, such as hospitals, workhouses and lunatic asylums.

Area of District in Acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 6,355.

Total Population at all ages, 6,094

Number of Inhabited Houses, 1,142

Average number of Persons per House, 5.33

At Census of 1901.